remaining cases have only recently been filed and SCICI is engaged in dialogues with the companies concerned for an amicable settlement.

**Abolition of Cess on Tea**

834. SHRI O. AJAGOPAL:

SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how much of the tea cess was spent for research development and export promotion during the last three years,

(b) what has been the actual collection of cess during that period; and

(c) whether abolition of cess on tea is being considered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Amount of Cess on tea spent for Research, Development and Export Promotion during the last 3 years has been as given below:—

(i) Research Grants for the year —

1990-91 ..... 145.78 lakhs
1991-92 ..... 107.56 lakhs
1992-93 ..... 292-43 lakhs

(ii) Development Grants for the year —

1990-91 ..... 46.87 lakhs
1991-92 ..... 36.68 lakhs
1992-93 ..... 70.25 lakhs

(iii) Foreign Promotion including administration charges for the year —

1990-91 ..... 588.50 lakhs
1991-92 ..... 665.89 lakhs
1992-93 ..... 504.15 lakhs

(b) Collection of Cess on Tea during the last three years is as given below:—

1990-91 ..... 12.07 crores
1991-92 ..... 10.88 crores
1992-93 ..... 11.10 crores (R.B.E.)

(c) At present, no proposal to abolish Cess on tea is under consideration.

Smuggling of Metals and Electronics Goods

835. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inspite of the liberalised policy announced by Government for import of precious metals at lesser import duty, smuggling of metals and electronic goods is going on in the country;

(b) what is the total quantity of goods seized by Customs authorities at different airports in the country; and

(c) what possible measure: Government are taking to curb smuggling of goods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Liberalised import policy including reduced import duty appears to have curtailed large scale smuggling of precious metals. However, smuggling of precious metals and electronics items such as printed circuit boards, disc drives etc. is still being noticed on a smaller scale.

(b) The total quantity of goods seized-by Customs authorities at different airports in the country during last three financial years is as follows:

| Financial Year | Value of goods seized (Rs. in lakks) |
|---|---|
| 1991-92 | 19889 |
| 1992-93 | 10558 |
| 1993-94 (Upto 31st Ja 94 n ) | 7270 (Prov.) |

(c) Anti-smuggling activities have been further intensified at all the international airports. Measures taken to curb smuggling include greater surveillance over sensitive areas at these airports, intensified intelligence collection, screening of baggage of passengers arriving on sensitive flights with the help of sophisticated equipments such as baggage X-ray machines and metal detectors and close coordination among all agencies concerned in the detection and prevention of smuggling.